



National Park Service
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Grand Canyon News Release

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Man Who Drove Car Over Edge at Grand Canyon Identified

Grand Canyon, Ariz. – The body of a man who drove his car over the edge of the Grand Canyon earlier this week has been identified as that of Gheorghe Chiriac of Apple Valley, California.

On Monday, July 13 at approximately 6:00 a.m., the Grand Canyon Regional Communications Center received multiple reports that a car had been driven over the edge near the El Tovar Hotel on the South Rim of Grand Canyon National Park.

Upon arriving at the scene, park rangers found tire tracks indicating that a car had been driven up onto the curb of the loading area between the El Tovar Hotel and the Kachina Lodge. The tracks indicated that the car then veered left, traveling through the grass behind Kachina Lodge until it reached the Thunderbird Lodge where it veered right and into the canyon. As the car had traveled a significant distance from the regular roadway, there was no wall or barrier where it went over the edge.

Rescue personnel descended on ropes and located the vehicle approximately 600 feet below the rim. The body of a lone male was located shortly thereafter. After the scene was documented, the body was transported to the rim by helicopter via long-line operation and then picked up by the Coconino County Medical Examiner.

The body has now been identified as that of 57 year old Gheorghe Chiriac who emigrated from Romania approximately 30 years ago. His death has been ruled a suicide.

The investigation into this incident was conducted by the National Park Service.

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